



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**REGION 10**  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101

April 13, 2007

Reply To  
Attn Of: ETPA-088

Ref: 00-030-AFS

Ranotta McNair, Forest Supervisor  
Attn: Hidden Cedar Project  
USDA Forest Service  
Idaho Panhandle National Forest  
3815 Schreiber Way  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

Dear Ms. McNair:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed **Hidden Cedar Project, Idaho Panhandle National Forest** (CEQ No. 20070095) according to our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

In our comments on the draft EIS in July 2006, EPA expressed concerns about the potential for adverse water quality impacts due to the proposed increase in road miles associated with the Proposed Alternative. We requested that the FEIS address concerns over increased sediment and increased water yield, and recommended the adoption of Alternative D or E as the environmentally preferred alternative. We are pleased that the selected alternative (Alternative F) was modified to incorporate features from the other alternatives in order to address these resource concerns.

EPA is satisfied with the U.S. Forest Service decision to select a modified alternative F as its environmentally preferred alternative in response to public comments. We believe that this alternative will both meet the stated purpose and need for the project, and help protect environmental resources that would be at risk in the Idaho Panhandle National Forest.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EIS. If you have questions or would like to discuss these comments, please contact Teresa Kubo of my staff at (503) 326-2859.

Sincerely,

/s/

Christine Reichgott, Manager  
NEPA Review Unit